BLUE GRASS BLADE

A. T. Parker
High and Ashland East Side Sep06

WE AIM TO CUT DOWN ERROR AND ESTABLISH TRUTH.

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THE TRUTH

COMES FROM ABROAD

Sanctified Hypocrites Meet With Failure in England and Big Audiences Nothing but Empty Seats

(By C. Cohen.)

Torrey and Alexander nave been in England.

It was natural that their efforts should meet with success as a toadying press will testify.

The truth is, after all, that their trip was a failure as will be understood by the following from the pen of C. Cohen in the London Freethinker. He cays:—

Not very long ago, the religious press was filled with accounts of the numerous accessions that were daily being made to the Christian ranks. At that time the Torrey-Alexander Mission was in full swing, and it had been preceded by the Welsh revival under Evan Roberts, as that had been preceded by the United Free Church Mission and similar movements. And since these missions, that were, so it was reported, securing souls by the thousands, leading to a great spiritual revival, etc., there have been numerous assurances that materialsm is quite discredited, and that the higher spiritualistic philosophy has been winning all along the line. Of course, those who had any conception of the facts of the case took all these statements for what they were worth, and were quite content to let Chrstian romancists get all the satisfaction possible imaginative productions. Facts remain facts when all is said and done, and the tendency of the age is not likely to be reversed by the ill-timed jubilations of hysterical religionists. It is less than a hundred years since good book in an hour than can be the Catholic Church admitted the revolution of the earth around the sun, but schoolboys knew it to be so nearly a couple of centuries before.

Outsiders knew all along what these Christian captures were worth. While Messers. Torrey and Alexander were preaching at the Albert Hall to sparse congregations, many of the daily papers published the lie about packed audiences and crowds turned away. The same journals repeated the tales of Torrey's converts, although one or two of the papers reported that Torrey seemed to be the only one present who could see them. He discerned them with the eye of faith. Those who know how this mission business is run know how worthless tthese statistics of conversion are. Apart from the positive lies which hardly any of these professional missioners shrink from telling, the genuine responses to the call for souls comes from those who visit mission after mission, getting saved at each, much as a confirmed drunkard would make a round of the public houses, did a system of free drinks exist. The monotony of the "experiences" recounted, and the identical phraseology used, are alone enough to show that we are dealing with experienced hands at the game. The net result of which is that all these missions are run to provide a little mental dissipation for a variety of Chrstians who are too mentally flabby to seek it in other directions, and far too lacking in soundness of character to develop the outlet of a healthy vice. Apart from this, their only function is to provide employment for a number of specialists in revivalism, a class of men who would certainly not be tolerated in a healthy-organized community.

Sooner or later the Churches must take their courage in both hands and face facts, and the Christian World, in a leading article on the subject, takes a gloomy view of the situation. It points out that the figures of Wesleyan Methodist Church, showing a decrease of 200 full members, 2,000 junior members, and over 6,000 on trial, are disquieting to all believers; the more so because the Wesleyan Church is symptomatic of the rest. The most successful cannot keep pace with the growth of population; the least successful show an actual decrease. When Freethinkers are asked for evidence of the success of their propaganda they might well point to these figures and these lamentations. Every person who drops out of the ranks of the believers does not chronicle his defection—very few do; and we have no penitent form and offer no encouragement to personal "testimony." But the result is there, and is shown in the figures and in the laments. We fight with time and evolution on our side, and can afford to look with confidence to the result.

When it comes to deal with the causes of the Church slump, the Christian perception of their real nature,, but obviously lacks the courage to press its suspicions too closely. It thinks that the rush from village to town, and even the migrations within the city from centre to suberb, may be responsible for much of the leakage. So, too, it may immediately, but not ultimately. If religious belief was nowadays a matter of genuine conviction, and church membership more than a social convention, these would not be at the mercy of a migration from village to town, or from city to suburb. It is really because religious belief is nowadays little more than a social convention, often supported from sheer mercenary motives, that when a man finds himself released from the social leash fuller play is given to his real feelings and opinions. It means that people can only be kept up to the religious standard so long as coercion of some sort is applied. Abolish this, give each person perfect freedom of action, and churches and chapels would soon become howling wildernesses of empty benches.

So, too, with the cause found in the unpopularity of preachers or of sermons. Of course, the man and the message will always have its influence. Still, no one can study the modern pulpit without realising that what the people want is to be entertained, and what the most popular preachers do is to try and entertain them. The entertainment being given, people will go to church, other things equal, as they go to a music hall or a theatre, and frequently stay away for the same reason.

The things named by the Christian World are not causes, but symptoms. The real causes lie much deeper than anything touched on byy the writer of the article, and these are that the churches no longer possess any social or intellectual vitality. Even ordinary people are beginning to realise that on no single subject of importance has any of the churches an independent message to deliver that is worth hearing. For all their science, their philosophy, or their sociology, they have to turn elsewhere. All they get within the churches is a very faint echo of the best that can be got outside. They are so accustomed to this that they have ceased to regard it as in any way remarkable that they have to go to outsiders for the truest knowledge on the matter Still, accustomed as people are to this, and assenting to it as they do, the absurdity of maintaining an army of men with nothing important to teach, and nothing of any value to do, gradually forces itself upon them. People are no longer easily imposed upon by the supposed learning or power of the clergy. Outside influences teach them how much this is worth, and their own experience endorses it. If people read they would find that more can be got from a gathered from sermons in a month. If they think, they realise what a game of makebelieve the whole thing is; while a growing number agree with Ruskin that—

> "In general, any man's becoming a clergyman in these days implies that, at best, his sentiment has overpowered his intellect; and that whatever the feebleness of the latter, the victory of his impertinent piety has been probably owing to its alliance with his conceit, and its promise being regarded as an oracle, without the trouble of becoming wise or the grief of being so."

The Christian World writer thinks the position demands a search for remedies rather than causes. But to get true remedies one must have a knowledge of causes, otherwise little that can be done will be of avail. And in this case, the only remedies that would be of use are impossible. If the united action of the churches can possibly convert the globe into a plane, and set the sun traveling round it instead of it traveling round the sun; if gravitation can be abolished, and mystical affinities reintroduced; if causation can be replaced byy miracle, and natural forces byy spirits; if evolution can be replaced by special creation, and brain disease by demoniacle possession; if education can be abolished, and heaven and earth repeopled by the army of supernatural beings and powers destroyed during the development of modern science, then the churches have a remedy, and one they would not hesitate to use if they could. But if these things cannot be done, then the case is truly hopeless.

For, really, nothing less than a revolution of this kind can ever give back to religgion its lost power. All religion is built upon the belief that the world is ruled by arbitrary supernatural intelligence, and has no real validity apart from that conception. The clergyman is fundamentally the miracle-worker, the intermediary between man and the supposed supernatural—for a cash consideration. This function is seen plainly enough in the savage medicine-man, it is almost equally evident with the Catholic priest, and it can be seen in the ordination of the Protestant cergyman and in the "call" of the dissenting preacher. All the power and influence of the clergy depends upon this belief, no matter how modified or disgguised it may be. But really educated people no longer believe in the intercessory power of the clergy. Nor can they look up to the clergy on account of their superior learning. This might have been done while education was the privilege of a few, and the abilityy to read and write suggested something of an occult quality. But reading and writing is now universal. The clergy are no longer looked up to, they are rather looked down upon. No one of any standing values their opinion as clergymen, while as a class they are mentally inferior to any other body of educated men in the community. They have had their day, and can only maintain themselves yb pandering to passion and prejudice, and acting as the protectors of interest that but for them, might have long since disappeared.

The problem for the Christian World to solve if it would save Christianity is, then, simple—in statement. It is to find out how to turn back the whole tide, of civilisation and to recreate the mental and social condition of the Dark Ages. Only this, and nothing more.

CHILD

LABOR IN NATION

Approved by a New York Banker Who Keeps An Eye Upon His Interest And Dividend Payments.

REFUSES DONATIONS AND GIVES HIS REASONS

(By Stella Hardie)

None need expect that the lion and the lamb could agree upon questions of personal policy that would be acceptable to both. The lion's ways are not the lamb's ways. Then one need not be surprised that a New York banker failed to agree with those who are seeking to stamp out child labor in the United States.

I have been deeply impressed with the perusal of two letters which appeared in the New York Commercial a few days ago. Associated with Felix Adler, and other humanitarians in the work of protecting childhood of the nation, to save them and spare them from becoming dwarfed both mental and physically by close confinement, at a tender age, in the mills and factories, is Mrs. Lillian D. Wald, of New York. It will be seen from the correspondence that she had addressed a letter to a New York banker asking that he contribute to the cause of the emancipation of little children. He replied, but, instead of agreeing with the lady he took a firm stand in favor of working of the children and I presume it can only be on the ground that it insures the payment of interests and dividends. I am content to let the Blade's readers judge for themselves if you can find room for the letters, which are as follows.—

Mrs. Bowen's Letter

"Dear Mr. Bowen: Do you know that thousands of our little, undeveloped children are working for wages in sweat-shops, glass factories textile mills and coal mines". Will you be one of the 1,000 persons in the United States giving $25 each to help emancipate them?

"The national child labor committee has undertaken an immense task. The indorsement of President Roosevelt, ex-President Cleveland and hundreds of our foremost citizens proves the worthiness of our cause. We are leading an anti-child labor movement that is growing so rapidly we cannot keep up with it unless we have more funds. State after state is appealing to us for direction and aid in local campaigns, and we cannot respond. If the American citizens, believing in protection to the helpless, do not aid us, most of the good already done will be lost."

"Twenty-five dollars invested under our direction will do more than $5,000 spent in unorganized effort. We are prepared to strike blows which will be felt for generations to come. Will you give us your help to the extent of $25, payable anytime you desire within the next six months."

The reply to that letter. Mr. Bowen replied in part, as follows:—

"You say do you that thousands of our little undeveloped children are working for wages in sweat-shops, glass factores, textile mills and coal mines?" Will you be one of one thousand persons in the United States giving $25, each to help emancipate them The national child labor committe has undertaken an immense task. We are leading in an anti-child labor movement that is growing so rapidly that we cannot keep up with it unless we have more funds. Two million boys and girls, under 16, in this country are working while other children play and go to school."

"Now, I will venture to predict that more useful men and men who will do things in the interest of the huan race will grow form these 2,000,000 workers than will from 4,000,000 of the same age who do nothing but play and go to school. I judge from my own experience and observation, and from the testimony of many successful men. I know that I spent much of my time between the ages of 10 and 16 working in a bank, a stone quarry, warehouse and at various times other things, sometimes for wages and sometimes for wages and sometimes without, and not only think it was no injury to me on the whole, but a great benefit toward developing my mental and physical powers. I have seen and talked with many successful men, and so far as I know, they have generally learned habits of industry, long before the age of 16.

"Look over the history of the successful men of NewYork, the men who are doing things worth while, for themselves and others. See if they have not worked and worked hard for long hours, before they were sixteen years of age.

"There seems to be a feeling worked up amongst a large portion of the people of this country that everything should be regulated by the legislatures. In my opinion, there are far too many laws now and most of them made by impractical men, but few of them enforced, and it is a good thing that they are not, for it would take an army of people to enforce them and the result would be detrimental.

"My observation and experience would lead me to believe that most people are reasonably honest and have good intentions, but there is more misery and poverty and vice in the world because boys and girls are not taught habits of industry and usefulness at an early age than all other causes combined.

"'While there are exceptions to the rule, I believe that employers generally are interested in the welfare of their employes and do more for their real interest than most of their critics would do if they were in the employer's position.

If it were practical to pass laws to compel every child in the country, eight or ten years of age, to work and

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HOW THE DOOM

OF DOGMA CAME

The Intellectual Food Offared by Theology Only Created Doubt and Led to a Complete Rejection of Faith

(By Henry Frank.)

In a series of articles written by Henry Frank and published in Tomorrow, the author portrays his transition from blind faith to right reason and in showing the point at which the final change came, says:

The struggle with my conscience was becoming intense. I was being forced to ask myself whether I was paying with my own soul and if the time must not inevitably come when I would throw the dice and cross the Rubicon.

More and more I heard the doctrines which I had caused myself to believe as the truth scoffed at and slyly mocked among the verry men who in public so grandiliquently stood as their sponsors and proud defenders. At last after ardently studying "Browne on the atonement" which purported to be a reasonable and incontrovertible defense of the traditional doctrine, dressed, however, in modern habilaments, I made bold to write out my own interpretation, which was the conflict with his, and yet which I believed was a logical confutation because founded on the very premises which he himself set forth.

It was a beautiful autumn day in Minnesota. Three of us were drifting a boat on one of Minnesota's dolce far niente lakes. One was a young man who has since benn recognized as one of the most successful pulpit orators and platform lecturers in the Methodist Church and who in those days was one of my particular chums. The other possessed of a more practical mind, has since been given the opportunity to develop his commercial instinct under the guise of a minister by being made one of the agents of the Methodist Book Concern, a very responsible position in this great church.

When the poise of our spirits had come to reflect the sweet calmness of the deep blue sky above and the placid grey-green waters beneath, and we were in such mental mood as to be recipient of intellectual food and susceptible to discussion, slyly I drew from my breast-pocket the little manuscript I had written in criticism of the "Atonement," and with permission slowly read it to them.

Ardently they listened, with minds critically inclined. Occasionally they would look at each other and express either approval or surprise. But whatever their feelings, they respected mine and clearly saw that I was sincere and earnest. That, indeed I had made it clear to them that the paper was a personal document and confessed the burden of my heart no less than the thoughts of my brain, was soon made evident. At last I finished. A dead silence settled on us all. I was embarrassed. I wanted honest criticism. I heard what might mean either disdain or laudation.

Finally my nearest chum, with whom in college I had often engaged in mental wrestling matches and who has since developed into the most popular rhetorician in the church, ventured an opinion. But it was not a criticism. It was indifferent persiflage. "Why on earth, Frank, do you want to waste your time resurrecting the dead past and trying to reconstruct it in line with the living present? The "Atonement' isn't meant in these days to demand our reasoning powers but our powers of imagination. There is no conception in the history of man that can be made as to excite the lachrymal glands of the crowd as the picture of Jesus on the Cross. Dwell on that and not on the theology of the Atonement, and you'll carry the audience with you every time."

"But," I said, "brother, you don't mean to insist that religion is all feeling and that reason and thought have no serious place in it?"

"No, of course not. But you must learn the art of the semblance of reasoning without actually performing it if you want to hold the crowd. What the people want in these days is pictorial eloquence and warm action in delivery. That captures them every time."

"Do you mean to tell me the church has come to this? Do our audiences consist of nothing more than assemblages of emotional animal whom we must tickle, as the visitors of the Zoo tickle the elephants with peanuts and candy?

The practical and commercially inclined member of this social trinity blurted out in a bblunder and more monitory fashion: "Frank, listen to me, do you or don't you want to remain in the Methodist ministry?"

"Naturally, I intend to remain."

"Well, then, take the advice of a friend; burn up the manuscript and never let the Elder or Bishop know that you entertained such notions. If you do, it's all day with you."

Disgust mingled with condemnation in my heart and I responded by saying that if it meant the stultification of my conscience and the price I must pay for my ministerial berth I was beginning to think I would prefer to sacrifice the latter to the former. so the years were wearing away and and more the conviction was coming to me that all the youthful sacrifices, social, domestic, commercial, professional, I had made for the sake of becoming a minister in an orthodox church were worse than the spendthrift follies of a cad. What had chiefly disappointed me was that the arguments I had advanced were manifestly unanswerable by these two leading church lights, and yet despite the truthfulness of my contention they preferred to swallow the vioation of intellectual candor and maintain an air of faith and retaining a respectable social position.

To one who has experienced the painful suffering such disclosures effect there is something pitiably naive in the critical remarks of some of the glib reviewers of "The Doom of Dogma," who prate about the apparent dishonesty of a man continuing to preach in a church whose doctrinal standards he has been forced conscientiously to reject. It is so much easier for these respectable casuists to discover the honesty of a man who still remains in the church and refuses to let the world know his doubts though they be dark as nimbus clouds, than the honesty of the man who doubts and yet lingers to confound the insincerity of those whose miseducation has dulled the edge of their conscience and perverted ther perceptions of the truth.

Nevertheless, in the course of time the spiritual burden one must carry who struggles to rise above the "annoyances of conscience" that he may adjust himself to the requirements of traditional respectability, becomes altogether too onerous to be endured. Just as I was approaching the pinnacle of my youthful ambitions and my name was beginning to be heard in the annals of the church, it began to be apparent to me that not many months would transpire before the public confession would become necessary and the abandonment of the ministry a conscientious obligation.

The last crashing experience I encountered at the disappointing period was the manifest relief the authorities of the church evince when one has been to them, " a thorn in the flesh" concludes to retire from the ranks.

It was at one of the largest conferences in the Northwest, in the dust of the twilight, immediately preceding adjournment sine die, that then to me a depressing confession was made. It was the sensation that shocked the quiet hours of the concluding session. It had been well known to all the

(Continued on Page 4.)

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The truth is, after all, that their trip was a failure as will be understood by the following from the pen of C. Cohen in the London Freethinker. He cays:—

Not very long ago, the religious press was filled with accounts of the numerous accessions that were daily being made to the Christian ranks. At that time the Torrey-Alexander Mission was in full swing, and it had been preceded by the Welsh revival under Evan Roberts, as that had been preceded by the United Free Church Mission and similar movements. And since these missions, that were, so it was reported, securing souls by the thousands, leading to a great spiritual revival, etc., there have been numerous assurances that materiaism is quite discredited, and that the higher spiritualistic philosophy has been winning all along the line. Of course, those who had any conception of the facts of the case took all these statements for what they were worth, and were quite content to let Chrstian romancists get all the satisfaction possible imaginative productions. Facts remain facts when all is said and done, and the tendency of the age is not likely to be reversed by the ill-timed jubilations of hysterical religionists. It is less than a hundred years since good book in an hour than can be the Catholic Church admitted the revolution of the earth around the sun, but schoolboys knew it to be so nearly a couple of centuries before.

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Sooner or later the Churches must take their courage in both hands and face facts, and the Christian World, in a leading article on the subject, takes a gloomy view of the situation. It points out that the figures of Wesleyan Methodist Church, showing a decrease of 200 full members, 2,000 junior members, and over 6,000 on trial, are disquieting to all believers; the more so because the Wesleyan Church is symptomatic of the rest. The most successful cannot keep pace with the growth of population; the least successful show an actual decrease. When Freethinkers are asked for evidence of the success of their propaganda they might well point to these figures and these lamentations. Every person who drops out of the ranks of the believers does not chronicle his defection—very few do; and we have no penitent form and offer no encouragement to personal "testimony." But the result is there, and is shown in the figures and in the laments. We fight with time and evolution on our side, and can afford to look with confidence to the result.

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The things named by the Christian World are not causes, but symptoms. The real causes lie much deeper than anything touched on byy the writer of the article, and these are that the churches no longer possess any social or intellectual vitality. Even ordinary people are beginning to realise that on no single subject of importance has any of the churches an independent message to deliver that is worth hearing. For all their science, their philosophy, or their sociology, they have to turn elsewhere. All they get within the churches is a very faint echo of the best that can be got outside. They are so accustomed to this that they have ceased to regard it as in any way remarkable that they have to go to outsiders for the truest knowledge on the matter Still, accustomed as people are to this, and assenting to it as they do, the absurdity of maintaining an army of men with nothing important to teach, and nothing of any value to do, gradually forces itself upon them. People are no longer easily imposed upon by the supposed learning or power of the clergy. Outside influences teach them how much this is worth, and their own experience endorses it. If people read they would find that more can be got from a gathered from sermons in a month. If they think, they realise what a game of makebelieve the whole thing is; while a growing number agree with Ruskin that—

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For, really, nothing less than a revolution of this kind can ever give back to religgion its lost power. All religion is built upon the belief that the world is ruled by arbitrary supernatural intelligence, and has no real validity apart from that conception. The clergyman is fundamentally the miracle-worker, the intermediary between man and the supposed supernatural—for a cash consideration. This function is seen plainly enough in the savage medicine-man, it is almost equally evident with the Catholic priest, and it can be seen in the ordination of the Protestant cergyman and in the "call" of the dissenting preacher. All the power and influence of the clergy depends upon this belief, no matter how modified or disgguised it may be. But really educated people no longer believe in the intercessory power of the clergy. Nor can they look up to the clergy on account of their superior learning. This might have been done while education was the privilege of a few, and the abilityy to read and write suggested something of an occult quality. But reading and writing is now universal. The clergy are no longer looked up to, they are rather looked down upon. No one of any standing values their opinion as clergymen, while as a class they are mentally inferior to any other body of educated men in the community. They have had their day, and can only maintain themselves yb pandering to passion and prejudice, and acting as the protectors of interest that but for them, might have long since disappeared.

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"You say do you that thousands of our little undeveloped children are working for wages in sweat-shops, glass factores, textile mills and coal mines?" Will you be one of one thousand persons in the United States giving $25, each to help emancipate them The national child labor committe has undertaken an immense task. we are leading in an anti-child labor movement that is growing so rapidly that we cannot keep up with it unless we have more funds. Two million boys and girls, under 16, in this country are working while other children play and go to school."

"Now, I will venture to predict that more useful men and men who will do things in the interest of the huan race will grow form these 2,000,000 workers than will from 4,000,000 of the same age who do nothing but play and go to school. I judge from my own experience and observation, and from the testimony of many successful men. I know that I spent much of my time between the ages of 10 and 16 working in a bank, a stone quarry, warehouse and at various times other things, sometimes for wages and sometimes for wages and sometimes without, and not only think it was no injury to me on the whole, but a great benefit toward developing my mental and physical powers. I have seen and talked with many successful men, and so far as I know, they have generallv learned habits of industry, long before the age of 16.

"Look over the historv of the successful men of NewYork, the men who are doing things worth while, for themselves and others. See if they have not worked and worked hard for long hours, before they were sixteen years of age.

"There seems to be a feeling worked up amongst a large portion of the people of this country that everything should be regulated by the legislatures. In my opinion, there are far too many laws now and most of them made by impractical men, but few of them enforced, and it is a good thing that they are not, for it would take an army of people to enforce them and the result would be detrimental.

"My observation and experience would lead me to believe that most people are reasonably honest and have good intentions, but there is more misery and poverty and vice in the world because boys and girls are not taught habits of industry and usefulness at an early age than all other causes combined.

"'While there are exceptions to the rule, I believe that employers generally are interested in the welfare of their employes and do more for their real interest than most of their critics would do if they were in the employer's position.

If it were practical to pass laws to compel every child in the country, eight or ten years of age, to work and

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HOW THE DOOM

OF DOGMA CAME

The Intellectual Food Offered by Theology Only Created Doubt and Led to a Complete Rejection of Faith

(By Henry Frank.)

In a series of articles written by Henry Frank and published in To-morrow, the author portrays his transition from blind faith to right reason and in showing the point at which the final change came, says:

The struggle with my conscience was becoming intense. I was being forced to ask myself whether I was paying with my own soul and if the time must not inevitably come when I would throw the dice and cross the Rubicon.

More and more I heard the doctrines which I had caused myself to believe as the truth scoffed at and slyly mocked among the verry men who in public so grandiliquently stood as their sponsors and proud defenders. At last after ardently studying "Browne on the atonement" which purported to be a reasonable and incontrovertible defense of the traditional doctrine, dressed, however, in modern habilaments, I made bold to write out my own interpretation, which was the conflict with his, and yet which I believed was a logical confutation because founded on the very premises which he himself set forth.

It was a beautiful autumn day in Minnesota. Three of us were drifting a boat on one of Minnesota's dolce far niente lakes. One was a young man who has since benn recognized as one of the most successful pulpit orators and platform lecturers in the Methodist Church and who in those days was one of my particular chums. The other possessed of a more practical mind, has since been given the opportunity to develop his commercial instinct under the guise of a minister by being made one of the agents of the Methodist Book Concern, a very responsible position in this great church.

When the poise of our spirits had come to reflect the sweet calmness of the deep blue sky above and the placid grey-green waters beneath, and we were in such mental mood as to be recipient of intellectual food and susceptible to discussion, slyly I drew from my breast-pocket the little manuscript I had written in criticism of the "Atonement," and with permission slowly read it to them.

Ardently they listened, with minds critically inclined. Occasionally they would look at each other and express either approval or surprise. But whatever their feelings, they respected mine and clearly saw that I was sincere and earnest. That, indeed I had made it clear to them that the paper was a personal document and confessed the burden of my heart no less than the thoughts of my brain, was soon made evident. At last I finished. A dead silence settled on us all. I was embarrassed. I wanted honest criticism. I heard what might mean either disdain or laudation.

Finally my nearest chum, with whom in college I had often engaged in mental wrestling matches and who has since developed into the most popular rhetorician in the church, ventured an opinion. But it was not a criticism. It was indifferent persiflage. "Why on earth, Frank, do you want to waste your time resurrecting the dead past and trying to reconstruct it in line with the living present? The "Atonement' isn't meant in these days to demand our reasoning powers but our powers of imagination. There is no conception in the history of man that can be made as to excite the lachrymal glands of the crowd as the picture of Jesus on the Cross. Dwell on that and not on the theology of the Atonement, and you'll carry the audience with you every time."

"But," I said, "brother, you don't mean to insist that religion is all feeling and that reason and thought have no serious place in it?"

"No, of course not. But you must learn the art of the semblance of reasoning without actually performing it if you want to hold the crowd. What the people want in these days is pictorial eloquence and warm action in delivery. That captures them every time."

"Do you mean to tell me the church has come to this? Do our audiences consist of nothing more than assemblages of emotional animal whom we must tickle, as the visitors of the Zoo tickle the elephants with peanuts and candy?

The practical and commercially inclined member of this social trinity blurted out in a bblunder and more monitory fashion: "Frank, listen to me, do you or don't you want to remain in the Methodist ministry?"

"Naturally, I intend to remain."

"Well, then, take the advice of a friend; burn up the manuscript and never let the Elder or Bishop know that you entertained such notions. If you do, it's all day with you."

Disgust mingled with condemnation in my heart and I responded by saying that if it meant the stultification of my conscience and the price I must pay for my ministerial berth I was beginning to think I would prefer to sacrifice the latter to the former. so the years were wearing away and and more the conviction was coming to me that all the youthful sacrifices, social, domestic, commercial, professional, I had made for the sake of becoming a minister in an orthodox church were worse than the spendthrift follies of a cad. What had chiefly disappointed me was that the arguments I had advanced were manifestly unanswerable by these two leading church lights, and yet despite the truthfulness of my contention they preferred to swallow the vioation of intellectual candor and maintain an air of faith and retaining a respectable social position.

To one who has experienced the painful suffering such disclosures effect there is something pitiably naive in the critical remarks of some of the glib reviewers of "The Doom of Dogma," who prate about the apparent dishonesty of a man continuing to preach in a church whose doctrinal standards he has been forced conscientiously to reject. It is so much easier for these respectable casuists to discover the honesty of a man who still remains in the church and refuses to let the world know his doubts though they be dark as nimbus clouds, than the honesty of the man who doubts and yet lingers to confound the insincerity of those whose miseducation has dulled the edge of their conscience and perverted ther perceptions of the truth.

Nevertheless, in the course of time the spiritual burden one must carry who struggles to rise above the "annoyances of conscience" that he may adjust himself to the requirements of traditional respectability, becomes altogether too onerous to be endured. Just as I was approaching the pinnacle of my youthful ambitions and my name was beginning to be heard in the annals of the church, it began to be apparent to me that not many months would transpire before the public confession would become necessary and the abandonment of the ministry a conscientious obligation.

The last crashing experience I encountered at the disappointing period was the manifest relief the authorities of the church evince when one has been to them, " a thorn in the flesh" concludes to retire from the ranks.

It was at one of the largest conferences in the Northwest, in the dust of the twilight, immediately preceding adjournment sine die, that then to me a depressing confession was made. It was the sensation that shocked the quiet hours of the concluding session. It had been well known to all the

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FREETHOUGHT, BUDDHISM AND CHRISTIANITY.

"Buddhist missionaries are making hundreds of thousands of converts in the United States. The great majority of the converts are educated men who believe that the religion of Buddha fit better with modern sceinctific views than does Christianity."—Prof. Frederick Starr, of the University of Chicago.

On such an authority we have it that while Christians are sending hireling missionaries to China and Japan in the hope of effecting a conversion to Chrstianity of the followers of the religion of Buddha, the latter are sending missionaries to this country to proselyte among the Christian adherents and it seems they are meeting with a most remarkable success.

There may be some truth in the oft-repeated assertion that any faith can find a ready following somewhere, but as between the religions that are thus brought into direct conflict the suggestion does not hold good nor does it allow a fair comparison. Christian periodicals boast of the number of converts the missionaries are making in the Orient, but we all know that no truly intelligent Jap, one who loves his country and his people, ever became a convert to Christianity. We also know that the bulk of the converts come from the ignorant and uneducated, and that the vast majority of them do so with sinister motives, under the influence of some expected and immediate gain or personal reward. On the other hand, Professor Starr assures us that the converts made by the Buddhists in this country are for the most part educated men who accept it as being a religious system in closer harmony with scientific facts than Christianity.

When one considers the route of travel by which Christianity reached this continent the statement of Professor Starr need excite no wonder. When the foundations of this republic were laid the cementing substance was the declaration that all men were equal in this life. This doctrine is purely Buddhistic and, therefore, essentially non-Christian. Buddhism asserts the equality of man. Christianity stands for caste. Buddhism inculcates a feeling of universal brotherhood. Christianity brought a division of the human family into several distinct classes. The Christian system, emanating from India, naturally incorporated and held to the idea of caste, but this notion got a death-blow the moment the Declaration of American Independence was signed and promulgated. This spirit of universal brotherhood is taking with the American people. This is the spirit and essence of Buddhsm. It discards the idea of a personal God. It rejects inquiry into an alleged first cause as being unphilosophical and contends that phenomena is all that should be dealt with by our finite minds. The finite cannot comprehend the infinite. This is Buddhism, it is Americanism and it is Free-thought. In all this there are no intermediaries between the creator and the creature, no vicarious action. Each individual is left to work out his own salvation. While Free-thought, based upon purely Amercan ideals, insists that death is a true deliverance from all our worldly ills, the Christian would force upon us the acceptance of a doctrine that leads to the belief that death is only a passage way to new miseries. One need not wonder that Buddhism should appeal to the educated, while Christianity can only gain where ignorance prevails.

With the trend of modern thought, that is intellectual thought, we are more and more impressed with the fact that before the face of history and scientific demonstration the Christian mythology is unable to much longer stand. This mental operation is apparent in all our modern literature. The national intellect daily grows more ashamed of its fables, especially as they relate to theological beliefs and opinions. Each succeeding age will either modify or repudiate them. The divergence comes as between the educated and the ignorant. The former are ready and willing to abandon all the cherished fictions of the past to the lower strata of human society, but many try to replace them with something more suitable. Accepting what Professor Starr says to be a truth, we can then understand why the Buddhist missionaries can succeed so well among the educated Americans and why American missionaries must go to the Orient for converts. This comes because intellect has outgrown faith. Age can no longer give approbation, or demand it.

The next question arises, to what significance do these counter conversions point? The answer is, an unsettled, dissatisfied public opinion toward them. Persons born in the Buddhist faith accept Christianity, and persons born into the Church of Christ readily abandon it and accept the Buddhist philosophy. All this suggests a desire for change. Then we have the further suggestion that change becomes the order of the universe and affects men as it does all else. This change operates upon the minds of all and the ultimate is that all religions will be forsaken and the philosophy of independent, materialistic Free-thought will triumph over all religious forms. This possibility increases just as the number of consenting intellects increase, and in the end truth will have for its criterion the universal consent of the race. Religious lies and imposture, no matter how powerfully they have been sustained in the past, must bow to the inevitable. Good auguries for the Free-thought philosophy may be drawn from the mechanical and material inventions, whereby man constantly improves upon the plans and designs of the fancied God, and in the intellectual collisions that must ensue, in the clash of opinion, the melting down of religious intolerance, in the examinations and analyses that are yet to be made, truth, and truth alone, will come forth with shining crown. Whatever there be that is uable to stand this trying ordeal must submit to its fate.

No disgrace can attach to those who, in America, have turned to the religion of Buddha as a substitute for Christianity. Buddhism is a more humane, a more philosophic religion than that of Chriset ever knew how to be. There is no harrowing tortures on a cross, no crown of thorns, no cup filled with vinegar, no crucifixion between thieves Under such conditions the Free-thinker can take a more cheerful view of the race than the Christian can possibly enjoy. The supreme tribunal of truth is in the people. In it man may place implicit confidence. The world may not witness the application of philosophic principles to the practice of our daily life for many years to come, but a start has been made in that direction, and in the end such a result is bound to come.

* * * *

GORKY ON THE ENTENTE CORDIALE.

What cares England for blood?

And what care can the Muscovite empire have for shedding blood?

None, whatsoever.

That, at least, is the answer that comes from the voice of history, both ancient and modern. England's so-called greatness has come from the thousands slain in battle for conquest only, while Russia has ascended the giddy heights with blood-stained feet until a crimson trail is left in the paht she has trod.

Of what possible effect can the arguments, the protestations, the utterances of Maxim Gorky have upon the proposed entente cordiale between these man-slaying nations? None. This does not lead to an inference that Gorky is not correct in his contentions. He is absolutely correct, and the pity is that his words will fall upon barren soil. Neither of the parties to the contract would dare to relinquish one iota of that which induced their present power in the physical and commercial world, and all of Gorky's protests will be in vain. We wish it might be otherwise, but it will not. If the rulers of both of these blood-besotted empires, clogged with religion and steeped in orthodoxy, insist upon the coalition it will come in spite of all obstacles.

Gorky objects to the proposed alliance because the Muscovite party to the contract is "drenched in blood." Small argument for Downing street or St. Petersburg. If either were ever moved by such a sentiment that fact is not of historic record. Their religious pretensions have failed to lead these monopolies into the right path, their politics have gone from bad to worse, and what matters it to them about the shedding of human blood? Is not gold of greater power? England placed firearms into the hands of savages to use them as allies against an Anglo-Saxon foe, and such a nation is not likely to offer a snub to the Czar because he is "seeking to rule," while his official family is "seeking to steal." They are both in the same business. Land and men, it is all the same to them. On thing is sure, and no man could do it better than Gorky, and that is to show by indisputable evidence that Russia would bring disgrace upon any so-called civilized nation forming an alliance wth her, and that should not be a difficult undertaking.

In the first place Russia could be of no help to any nation in financial distress. She is, herself, a borrowing nation and not a lending nation. The consideration would have to pass to her and could not pass from her. Again, in case of war she would be an absolute drawback, for since the war with Japan her army has become undisciplined and disorganized and unpatriotic. It is one of the political anomalies that there is even talk of an Anglo-Russian alliance.

There is one element by which the alliance may be prevented, and that is the church. The Church of England would never consent to an alliance with Greek Catholocism, unless something tangible in the shape of profit or gain was coming therefrom to the Church of England. The orthodox leaders of Great Britain are a hard-headed lot. They could not be guilty of an original idea. For the sake of a common humanity the Blade hopes that Gorky's plea might become effective, but there is obvious danger the other way.

* * * *

THE PEOPLE'S CHURCH.

The late Robert G. Ingersoll once outlined a church to which he could both subscribe and give his membership. Since that time numerous attempts have been made to establish a church that could attract the thinking masses of the country, a church that could hold and boast an intellectual allegiance.

Judging from a communication and circular that have reached this office, the organization that has made the nearest approach to being such a church is that known as the People's Church, at Aurora, Illinois. On a recent Sunday it rendered what was denominated an "Emerson Program," which consisted altogether of an exposition of the principles enunciated by that great scholar. While, in a measure, there is an attempt at conformity with a ritualistic service, common to the orthodox churchs, yet it is such a marked improvement upon the old forms and formulas that it is deserving of wide attention. The church is presided over by J. M. A. Spence. We are not familiar with the name, but if he is in any way responsible for that program he is certainly far removed from orthodoxy. The program includes music, singing, both splendid attractions, as the orthodox church has long since discovered and used to draw the people into its sanctuaries. This is enhanced by responsive readings, and for the occasion mentioned these readings were made up of selections from the writings of Emerson. As there is no taint of orthodoxy to be discovered in them, the Blade can well afford to quote them here. They were as follows:

What is a man born for but to be a reformer, a remaker of what man has made, a renouncer of lies, a restorer of truth and good, imitating that great Nature which embosoms us all.

And which sleeps no moment on an old past, but every hour repairs herself, yielding us every morning a new day, and with every pulsation a new life?

Whoso would be a man must be a non-conformist. He who would gather immortal palms must not be hindered by the name of goodness, but must explore if it be goodness.

The objection to conforming to usages that have become dead to you is that it scatters your force. It loses your time, and blurs the impression of your character.

If you maintain a dead church, contribute to a dead Bible society, vote with a great party....... under all these screens I have difficulty to detect the precise man you are.

But do your thing, and I shall know you. Do your work, and you shall re-enforce yourself.... By persisting in your path, though you forfeit the little, you gain the great.

You become pronounced. You demonstrate yourself, so as to put yourself out of false relations, and you draw to you the first-born of the world,—those rare pilgrims, before whom the vulgar show as spectres and shadows merely.

I ought not to allow any man, because he has broad lands, to feel that he is rich in my presence. I ought to make him feel that I can do without his riches, that I cannot be bought,—neither by comfort, neither by pride. Emerson.

Following this, another service was devoted to Walt Whitman, and the indications point to the opening of such a church as Ingersoll described.

* * * *

SUICIDE AND INSANITY.

That religion fanaticism will lead inevitably to insanity or suicide, or both, is now too well demonstrated to need argument.

Our jails are filled with Christians, among them many preachers of the faith, and our asylums contain hundreds who have suffered a mental aberration because of too much religion. Every day some new grave is opened, somewhere, to receive what is left of one who has taken his or her own life through religious zeal, and every day the door of an asylum ward swings open to admit another religious devotee within its four walls.

If any argument were needed these constitute an abundance. Scientific and historic facts are unnecessary. Religion can be judged by its own fruit and th ejudgment will be bad enough if righteously rendered. It stands self-condemned, self-convicted, . It is being proven to be more and more a curse to humanity as the days come and go. Innumberable cases are on record and new ones are coming to light that place religion, especially the Christians brand, in the category of evils that are to be condemned by all mankind.

Some may say, that we would not condemn religion because of one pervert, because of one sad case, any more than we would condemn music because of an occasional discord. There is much force in such an argument, but we have yet to find one instance where religion has worked absolute good. It may be true that many religious men and women are good. But it is enough to say that they would have been just as good if they had never known the christian religion. They arenot good because they are religious. Goodness does not depend upon religion, but religion steals all it can lay its hands upon from that which is good and appropriates it as its own. Morality is claimed as an adjunct of Christianity when as a matter of fact it was taught and practised long ages before the Christain religion was known. Honesty is claimed as being essentially Christain and yet honesty was inculated and lived up to by men and women who lived and died before Christianity was born and it is being inculcated and lived up to by men and women today who are in no sense tainted with Christianity.

During the past week the Blade has been in receipt of a copy of the Wauchula Telegram, a weekly newspaper published at Wauchula, Florida. At the same time we received a newspaper clipping from another source which has the appearance of being from the Louisville Evening Post. The former is evidently edited by one who has inplicit belief in the theory that his own particular religion is the Simon-pure brand, and all others impositions. The latter is edited by one who is not over flushed with any religion. The former contains a three column article with scare headlines which inform its readers that "Religious Fanaticism drove Williams to a Suicide's Grave" and the proceeds to berate two Pentacostal preachers for being the caus of it. From the report they were the direct cause and they ought to be prosecuted for having contributed to the man's sad and untimely death. The Clipping tells us that one, James M. Daniel, of Eldorado, Oklahoma, has gone insane over religion and was committed to an asylum. Both items have been accorded prominent places in the daily press and they should teach the people of America a fearful lesson. The very reading thereof ought to be a warning that the people should let all religion severely alone.

Assuming that the editor of the Wauchula Telegram is a Christian of a special variety, it is amusing to read what he has to say concerning Christians of another variety. He denounces them as fanatics, perhaps, forgetting that they felt the same way concerning his religion. It is seldom, however, that a coroner's jury renders a verdict that a suicide came to his death because of this religion fanaticism, and yet the jury that sat upon the inquest of this rendered the following:—

"We, the jury impaneled to inquire into the death of Thomas F. Williams, of Crewsville, have found upon a thorough investigation that said Thomas F. Williams came to his death by a self-inflicted wound with a knife, stabbing himself between the fourth and fifth rib on his left side, near the heart, and that said wound was inflicted by his own hand causing suicide. We find upon examining witnesses that the said Thomas F. Williams at the time of his death was suffering from melanchoiia, brought on by religious excitement. So say we all."

Comenting upon the subject, the editor of Telegram says:—

"A suicide's grave, a heart-broken mother and an indignant community is the result of the ravings of a bunch of religious fanatics who have been holding forth in Wauchula for about two weeks prior to last Monday, when their doctrines culminated in the death, by his own hand, of T. F. Williams, a son of Mr. and Mrs. Thos. Eph. Williams, of Crewsville."

How pleasant it shall be for these brethren to dwell together in unity, and what convincing arguments we are given against religion in all its shapes and forms.

* * * *

A DANIEL COME TO JUDGMENT.

One by one the pilgrims are coming.

The Blade sometimes thinks that if we leave the pious elements to their meditations things will ultimately work our way, or else, a little prodding now and then may do some good by helping them.

For a generation or two the Freethinkers have been urging the necessity of protecting our schools from the pernicious influences of religion and the Blade has made ardent advocacy of that doctrine. Now help has come from an unexpected source.

In many parts of the country commencements exercise shave been held and both young and old in all sorts and manner of schools are preparing for the vacation period. From the infant classes, through the grammar grades, to the High schools and collegiate institutions, the past few weeks have been exceedingly important, but in none has this been so marked that when the graduating class of the Louisville University school gave its exercises before the woman's club in the Kentucky Metropolis a few days ago. Seventeen young men and women took part in a good program, but the climax came, the crown and summit of things were reached when Miss Helen Ameila Flarsheim, one of the speakers, delivered an adress upon the subject of 'Religious Instruction in our Public Schools.'

We do not feel like spoiling her argument by attempting to offer one of our own. For this reason we reproduce what is reported of that speech and assert that we endorse it in full. We might add that if more women like her could be found in the world, with the courage to think and the courage to express what she does think, it would be happier, brighter and better for their having been in it. Upon the subject assigned to her she said:—

"There is a movement on foot, quite stealthy, limited as yet in its activity, but none the less dangerous for all that, its supporters might be divided into two classes, stirred by different motives and with different ends in view. The one, using an unlawful means to gain a selfish end, the other simply mistaken, short-sighted. The first is composed of zealots of different denominations, who seeing the inability of churches to hold the men of the day with wornout creeds, think that religion is declining, and they raise a great hue and cry. "The people have ceased to believe! Let us save the little ones!" But well they know that to introduce openly into the school supported by the common purse any particular dogma would be to call forth a storm of indignation from the adherents of other faiths, and so they plan to edge in with a shallow, neutral, lifeless sort of religion which, they say, will offend no one. Friends who actuate it are mistaken if they think to achieve their end, even should they succeed in pushing religion into the public school.

"The other class is made up of well meaning but misdirected folks who are the more dangerous because their motive is really sincere, and they appear, not to be seeking innovation, but to defend conditions already existing in a great many cities. "You are making a great fuss about nothing, they answer to protests, a moral atmosphere is essential to the school-room., and what harm can there possibly be in reading a verse from the Bible and saying "The Lord's Prayer?" Practically everyone believes in these."

"For the good of the individual, for the good of the schools, for the good of religion itself, let us keep the public school free from that function which belongs to the church and the home—the formal teaching of religion."

* * * *

JONAH AND THE WHALE.

Did the whale swallow Jonah?

After all the centuries that have intervened since the Lord God is said to have prevented Jonah from crossing the state line and getting beyond

his jurisdiction by causing a whale to swallow him, and after all the centuries of Christian teaching anent the circumstances, it is to be put up to an American court to determine what element of truth there is in the story.

When passing upon the issues in controversy the Court might also determine, judicially, whether Jonah swallowed the whale, the whale swallowed Jonah or whether the Christian church membership has ignorantly swallowed both.

The facts in the case are that the Jonah and whale fake is to be used to enable a preacher, a dear brother in the Lord, who is known by the name of "Rev. Dr. Gustav A. Hoffman" of St. Louis, to dodge payment of a note for $5,000 which he had given as a donation to the Bible College of Missouri. The note is due an un paid. The preacher wants it to remain unpaid. In fact he refuses to pay it. The College has brought suit on the note before Judge McElhenny of the Circuit Court of St. Louis and the preacher sets up as a defense that the College should not have judgment against him on the note because, as he declares, the College is teaching that the Jonah-whale story is a myth and a guilty of other tendencies toward infidel doctrine.

In order to help him to make out his case the delinquent defendant proposes to take the depositions of Elder J. W. Mc Garvey, of Lexington, to try to prove that the whale did actually swallow Jonah but the Blade is unable to understand how such a deposition can be taken as McGarvey was not an eyewitness to the alleged transaction and the preacher's attorneys ought to know that heresay testimony is not admissible in a court of law. Of course, McGarvey might testify as an expert, and by so testifying he would be allowed to express an opinion. But before he can do this he must qualify as an expert and testify that he has had experience along that line. Nineveh is so far away that it is doubtful if the records of that municipality could be brought here to assist in the case. Depositions might be taken from the present generation of the Ninevites as to what the records did once show, but as the generation of Jonah are dead and gone there are none to give testimony that they actually saw the fish vomit Jonah upon the dry land. Had some kodak fiend been on hand at the time, or could a copy of the daily papers of that day be secured they might have helped some, but it may be that the ubiquitious interviewer had failed to get in his graft. Although science questions the episode there is yet chanance for this dear brother to dodge payment of the debbt by having some devout defender of the Bible consent to be swallowed by a whale in order to prove the inerrancey of the scriptures. And why not himself? There are $5,000 at stake.

Many of our readers will remember Dr. McGarvey the proposed witness in the case. In a recent interview he has declared the fake fish story to be a truth, and has suggested that if his depositions are taken at all they will so state. We are at a loss to understand just how Dr. McGarvey knows the Jonah story to be true. The Bible does not prove it. All that the Bible can do is to present the "statement" and it comes without a particle of authority, other than the Bible itself. This may be evidence but it is not proof and not such proof as will be accepted by a modern court. If that preacher does not want to pay the note and wishes to dodge it, why don't he be frank enough to say so? McGarvey cannot help him for in the end the only thing he can do is to profess his belief in the man swallowing fish and that is all he can say on the subject. His belief does not make it true. It will only show how child-liking, how simple, how easy, how foolish, he can be.

It is sad that Attorney John F, Merryman, who represents Dr. Hoffman, admits that he will be somewhat at a disadvantage in proving that Jonah was actually swallowed by the sea monster, as the eye witnesses to the event have long since died, and heresay testimony is hard to get in a legal record, but, nevertheless, the church dignitaries will be given an opportunity to be heard on this burning question.

From the published accounts we learn that answer to the suit he alleges that the Bible College teaches that there was a double creation n the first and second chapters of Genesis; that the story of the Garden of Eden and the creation and the fall of man is a fairy tale; that the story of the flood is fiction and that they hold up Jonah and several of the prophets to ridicule.

Because the Bible College of Missouri employed Charles Manford Sharpe as a lecture, it gives Dr. Hoffman a basis of an attack on the Chicago University, at which Dr. Sharpe is a lecturer. The Chicago University, Dr. Hoffman alleges, is well known as a hot bed of infidelism, and he says, has been repudiated by the great brotherhood of the Baptist church. He alleges that the professors of that institution call in newspaper reporters when they deliver a special shaft of ridicule against the Holy Scriptures, in order that their reviling against the basic truths of the Christian religion may receive the widest publicity.

The mere fact that the Bible College of Missouri employs a lecturer from such a University, says, Rev. Hoffman, indicates that it has changed the purpose for which it was incorporated, namely, to prepare men for the ministery. In its twelve years existence Dr. Hoffman says that the Bible College has not sent out a dozen preachers and cannot point to a dozen converts and that it has been repudiated by the Brotherhood of Missouri, who are compelled, by reason of the baneful heresies of the institution, to send their children elsewhere."

While much might be said concerning the use less and unnecessary waisting of judicial endeavor, yet the friction here indicted is enough to show that infidelity is making inroads upon orthodox institutions. It is an encouraging sign. Speculation as to the truth of the Jonah story may not count for much for at its best the court cannot decide it to be a fact or that it is untrue. All that the court can do is to decide that it is taught in the Old Testament; and the money was intended as an aid to the propagation of that Old Testament which included the Jonah fish yarn, and that refusing to teach it as a truth, he should be accorded some rights by avoiding having to pay that note. Jonah was made the patron saint of amateur fishermen and these have apotheosized him from time immemorial. For our part we don't care a durn and it seems a mighty poor excuse to be offered by a preacher in an effort to dodge an honest debt.

* * * *

THERE SHALL BE NO DEATH!

Whence comse death?

By what means can deata be conquered, or is it to be that the universal law that unto all who have life death shall come is to be set aside, repealed, rendered null and void and held for naught?

Death has always been in the world and always will be in it so long as there shall exist those who have life. The term are corelative. The one could not be known without the other. We could never have known light if thehe had been no dark.

The Blade does not wish to be understood as tavoring death under an and all conditions but there are conditions under which death comes as a happy release from earthly ills and woes and as such it is to be welcome and not to be dreaded or feared. The purpose of this articles to show the arrant folly of which some people can be guilty, if the daily reports be true. It is sometimes said that there is nothing like going away from home to learn the news. By the way of London, and through the agency of that generally reliable publication, the British Medical Journal, we learn that there has recently been formed in Iowa the Anti-Death League. Never heard of it before, and have no idea whether or not the British Journal's information is correct, but on the chance that the paper is correctly informed, we welcome the Anti-Death League to the long list of organizations that offer an opportunity to the "j'iner." The aims and the methods of this Iowa organization as set forth by the British publication are interesting and ought to become popular. The basis of the society as near as we can find out is that getting sick and dying are merely habits, and no one will deny that they are bad habits. To cure the ravages of these habits the society pledges its members to abstain from them for all time, and never to get sick or never to die. Violation of this pledges is severely punished, especially violation of the latter part of it. If a member gets sick and takes to his bed he is fined; a second offense doubless the fine, and a third indulgence of the habit calls for expulsion from the organization. This sounds all right, for obviously it would be extremely awkward for a society that denies the necessity for sickness to have a lot of sick folks on the membership list. There is one thing certaii about this new departure in the way of organizations, it will have no "dead ones" among its members.

It is going to be a trifle difficult for some people to get the hang of this new order of things, and we predict that for a while at least the progress of the Anti-Death Society towards popularity will be slow. It will necessarily be hard to teach people this complete order of things. The sick are now looked upon as entitled to attention and indulgence; under the regime of the organization the best the sick man will get will be the worst of it, as instead of nursing, he will figuratively get cursing. Most societies for the interest of the people have some sort of sick benefits; this new scheme reverses this and proposes to punish by fines those who get sick—make them pay for the priviledges and the luxury, as it were.

A serious train of thought ma well be set in motion after all by the formation, or merely by the suggestion of such an organization. It has for its starting point the idea that the one universal want of man is to escape death. There is much to sustain this idea, but then it is universal? Does man—do all men— want to live on and on into eternity? The fiction writers have dealt interstingly, but it has always seemed inadequately, with this theme. One of Bulwer Lytton's novels has to do with the man who was doomed to live forever. Eugene Sue in his 'Wandering Jew' has touched upon the idea.

These writers attribute to their heroes—the victims of everlasting life—great sorow and anything but the happiness that should come from the fulfillment of one's wishes and the gratification of the heart's desire. The idea presents the spectacle of the world moving on, and old things passing away and new and strange ones coming to fill up the stage of life, while the man doomed to eternal life stands still, worse than, "a stranger in a strange land." No, Death King of Terrors though we call him, is not man's greatest enemy, and the organization formed for the purpose of setting him at defiance cannot be looked upon as having at heart man's best interest or greatest happiness. Rather let those who would defy the evils that besent and threaten man, form an organization for defying and setting at naught man's dread of death. The best way to do this is to teach man to so live that death means not evil but good; that he may go through life without constant fear of death. Rather let us form organizations to teach man to so employ the opportunities of life that when he is commanded "to join that innumberable caravan that moves on to that mysterious realm where each shall take his chamber in the silent halls of death, he go, not like the quarry slave, scouraged to his dungeon, but sustained and soothed by an unfaltering trust, approach the grave as one who wraps the drapery of his couch about him and lies down to pleasant dreams."

FOUNDATION

AND FINAL DESTINY

Of the religion of Christ as Reviewed and Judged from History.. Trend of Events Makes Prophecy Clear.

(By Henry Goldberg)

In his closing chapter of an admirable work written on this subject, the author says:

"We can tell the future by looking into the past. Who could in the past have thought that the great power of the Roman pontiff would be broken? That he who made kings and emperers tremble upon their thrones would be held up to derision in his own country? If the human race will progress in knowledge in the next three hundred years as it has in the past, then Christianity will be annihilated. The hand of the Christian is surely pointing that way. Science, free thought and free speech will surely accomplish its downfall. All the great Hebrew thinkers, and some of the most learned Christian theologians, do repudiate the idea that the Bible is of divine origin. And as soon as the majority of the common people become cognizant of this truth, then the Bible will fall from its high pinnacle and in this fall it will drag the whole Christian structure a long with it, because when the foundation of a building gives away the whole structure must collapse.

It is because the present is the child of the past that prophecy is possible. If every day stood isolated and unrelated in its events to other days, we could have neither prophecy nor philosophy of history. We are able to interpret the past and forecast, to some extent, the future, because the morrow is the effect of cause which exist today. As the present was in the past so is the future germinal in the present, as the oak is in the acorn. He who underrstands today may, with some approach to a reasonable certainty, predict the determining principles of tomorrow. It to any man were to be given that insight which is termed prophetic and by which, interpreting rightly the events and principles of tomorrow. If to any man tempt an estimate of some factors which are to share in the making of succeeding days, that man could wish for on fairer point of vantage than the pedestal afforded by this corner stone.

It is remarkable how the priesthood of today are trembling with fear in regard to the progress people are making toward enlightenment and truth, and they are anxious to keep the people in ignorance and to nurse the superstitions of old. They no doubt have a rememberance of the shocks which science has given to many of their cherished convictions, and it is their suspicion that it may eventually uproot all they regard as sacred. These men can see a cloud coming, and they might as well try to prevent the sun from giving light as to stop the flow and progress of human intelligence and reason. The doctrine of Evolution, the belief in Pantheism, is becoming too potential; the application of historical criticism in the so-called Holy Scriptures has excited influences which, if not stopped, will do serious damage to the old superstitious beliefs. The priests, having an understanding of the times, can see the peril, and therefore endeavor to guard against their own downfall. In order to prevent such a catastrophe, the Episcopal bishops, assembled in council in the city of New York, October 18, 1894, issued the so-called "pastoral letter." It was their fond hope that this letter would have a great influence not only within the particular ecclesiastical body to which it was addressed, but, in the larger community, embracing other similar societies professing faith in Christ as the divine Savior. They thought that it would have an influence of the conviction and belief of a multitude of persons in respect to that primary article of Christian faith—the incarnation—and other essential doctrines of Christianity, including the inspiration of the so-called Holy Scriptures. They saw that the Christian creed is attacked on all sides with restless vigor; that is, with the weapons of common sense and reason; and unbelief and skepticism have invaded the domain of what was once united Christendom to an alarming extent even those who occupy positions as ministers or theological professors in avowedly Christian churches and universities, have been the leaders in this warfare; that is, the warfare of common sense versus superstition and bigotry. And I honestly believe that the former will eventually triumph over the latter. In this pastoral letter, written only twelve years ago, they say the following:

"We have availed ourselves of the opportunity to meet in council to consider our duty, in veiw of certain novelties of opinion and expression which have seemed to us to be subversive of the fundamental verities of Christ's religion; the motive, therefore, of the issue of this pastoral letter is to oppose, and, if possible to check common sense and reason."

They further say that we must believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ, we must believe that he was the Son of God and is the second person in the adorable Trinity; the assumption of a true and proper humanity by a virginal birth; the unity of person and distinction of natures in our Lord Jesus Christ; his atoning death bodily resurrection and his ascension to heaven and sovereignty. The pastoral letter also affirms in general terms that the Bible is the word of God and inspired. It says that the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures is a postulate of faith, not a corollory of criticism. It cannot lawfully be questioned by any Christian man, and least of all by men who have sealed their convictions of the certainity of the faith with the solemn vows of ordination. The pastoral letter instructs the clergy and laity, to whom is addressed, respecting two doctrines—the incarnation of the inspiration of scripture—which it sets before them as Christian verities to be received without question.

These bishops intimate that their letter is an inspired utterance, and is therefore authoritative:

We, your bishops, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, are speaking not as truth seekers, but as truth receivers."

The pope himself could not speak with greater dogmatism than this. The doctrine that the Church is the inspired authority in interpreting the Scriptures, and that the utterances of its officers are to be received without question, appears as plainly as in the assertions of this document inferentially. Not only are doctrines of the person of Christ and the inspiration of the scriptures set forth, but the body of moral teaching held by the Church is made dependent of them, and the doctrine of inspiration and dogmatic authority of the Church, moved by the Holy Ghost speaking through its appointed leaders is clearly indicated. This inspired letter was received by the general public with derision.

Faith and reason join hands and point toward the future. The man who accepts progressive ideas, who amends his behavior in accordance with higher ethical standards, and casts away whatever obscures and weakens the will, is the most complete and the best representative of religion. To assent to creeds that are not believed will not change the heart. We must find our means of grace and helps to glory where we are. Occupy the days and hours with what is suitable for aiding humanity at large, and let our spirits lie open to the best influences. The religion of the future will be more simple than in the past. It will take up the greater things and drop out the little "isms" over which men have controversies now. It will give place to humanities and to teachings of science. It will be the miraculous in the common and divine in the human. It will be above the plane of controversy. It will aim to make truth the law of life, and seek to lead in the better way from reason and glad choice.

The Jews are still looking for the coming of the Messiah and the Christians expect that Jesus will come again, and the prophet says it shall come to pass in the last day. What does this phrase signify? Does it mean the last days of the world? If it will be the last day of the human race, and what need will there be of a Messiah? My interpretation is that it means the last day of strife, bloodshed, the last day of hatred and prejudice, the last day of superstition and bigotry. And he who will bring all this to pass will be the Messiah.

THE SPIRITUAL PAUL PRY

Commenting upon a proposition to install the Confessional in Protestant Churches, as a means of acquiring greater personal control over the mind and conduct of men and women, Secular Thought, says—

Familiarity may sometimes breed contempt, but it is evident that it does not always do so. The familiarity of Protestant preachers with the practices of the Romish Church has evidently led some of them to see how useful these practices might be made among the Protestant sects, if they be adopted there, to consolidate the power of the Protestant preachers. Many Anglican ministers have adopted the confessional as a regular part of their Church practice, and no doubt find it gives them much more power over their flocks than they once had.

It is now the turn of the Presbyterians to adopt the same practice, if we may judge from the opinion expressed by the Rev, John MacKay, of Cresent Street Presbyterian Church, Montreal, when "inducting" Rev. Clark to the pastorate of a Westmount church. He said:

I am rather surprised that an institution which exists at present in the Roman Catholic Church has never been introduced into the principles of our church. It is the only true medium by which a pastor can be to his congregation what he ought to be. I refer to the confessional."

In other words, Mr. MacKay's idea of what a pastor should be to his congregation is that he should be a Paul Pry, a "spiritual" as well as temporal dictator, a universal referee, a debaucher of youth of both sexes, and incidentally the father of a good many of his people. Mr. MacKay should be trounced by all decent people.

BUDDHA AND HIS TEACHINGS

One Code of Morals by Which Men and Women Alike Were Judged. Facts For Comparison.

(By C. Severance.)

Our friend, W. M. Myer, M. D. is an admirer of Buddha, and takes exceptions to my statement that every religion on the globe is the enemy of free thought. I do not admire that ancient character and his method of living, though some of his moral ideas when in touch of reason are good and acceptable; but the remark about religion I reaffirm with force and vigor.

Now let us take a look at Buddha and see how he began his career as a teacher. Dissatisfied with life—as we all are at times—he cut out his trial marriage, left his wife and child and went into the forest to live. There with five followers converted to his way of thinking an austere life was entered, and everything possible to kill our natural desire was resorted to; for self-denial and chastity—"chastity" always means the killing of one's love nature for the opposite sex, the sweetest thing in life—was regarded as a care for the ills of life. While he and his associates had a code of ten prohibitions, they did not establish a religion nor pretend to, that same later. They had for a code of morals—morals are rules to govern human action in this life—not to kill, or even injure, anything that lived; not to steal or commit adultery; not to use strong drink or take food at improper times; not to look at dances and plays, nor be violet and rash in speech; not to have costly raiment, perfume or ornaments, not to have a large bed or quilt, and not to receive gold or silver. In addition they were required to use clothes made of rags picked up in burying or crematory grounds or on the roads, and to have ony three such coats all made by the wearer's own hands. They were to live exclusively on food given in charity and without asking; never to eat or drink after midday; to live in the forest or jungles, and to have no roof but the foliage on the trees. And this was the origin of Buddhaism which later on evoluted into a religion that had gods to worship, and which once propitiated their favor by the sacrifice of living beings. Centuries after Buddha lived, legends gave his entrance into this world exactl as our Jesus came. He was born of a virgin without an earthly father, and at five years of age went into a trance and revealed more wisdom than our Christian God possesses. He was worshipped as a god and is today in Tibet and other sections of the northern school; and when Christian missionaries first went there they found a system of religion so much like there own—Roman Catholic—they thought it must be an imitation by the devil. These Buddhists have shaven priests, bells and rosaries, images and holy water; popes, abbots, monks, the confessional, purgatory, and a dead virgin they worshipped. And further resemblance was found in the fact there was oppression of all that; the idleness and corruption of the monks, the despotism of the government and the poverty and beggary of the people. Religion is the same thing wherever you find it, and Buddhism is now a religion if it was not when Buddha the athiests tried to get into Nirvana by killing every natural desire. That was what he started out to do, and, that he and his followers proposed to live without working like a modern hobo, it seems in the fact that their code compelled them to live exclusively on food given in charity. No, Dr. Meyer, I am not an admirer of Buddha, and the world generally condemns dirty tramps clothed in rags, who live on charity given by those who work and produce. There is a quick and easy way to get into Nirvana which is a mental state where one hardly knows whether he is dead or alive; and that is by getting about half drunk and remaining in that stupid, semi-conscious condition. But that is not living, for life is thought and action; and when one ceases to think and act in a rational manner, he had better stop eating charity food descend into the grave and be buried forever. We do not need Buddha nor his teachings and the religion that has grown out of them is one of the gigantic evils that afflict this world like Christianity. Reason is the thing to live by, and Buddha rejected this when he clothed himself in rags and was fed by charity.

RAPID GROWTH OF OF BALHAI FAITH

Although Coming in the Guise of a New Religion, its Principles are Superior to those of Christianity

(By Maude Jacobs)

The following article, which is extremely interesting, first appeared in Tomorrow Magazine. The experiences given, while showing how a religion can start up and grow, also demonstrates that the world is ready for a change:

Since science has taught us to regard religions as natural evolutions rather than as divine revelations, and has shown us that belief, we are prepared to understand that religions are born of human experiences and we look to them not so much as factors in the development of morals as indications of the advancement in intellectual and spiritual growth already attained by the people of the age in which they flourish.

This Ingersoll briefly and aptly expressed in his familiar declaration "An honest God is the noblest work of man."

Since also we know the mind can grasp no truth which the life has not in some way already embodied, or in other words, that there can be no recognition of a truth unless the mind has been previously prepared byy the sum of the life experiences for receiving it we can understand that the spread of any faith depends not upon its divine origin and innate power to extend itself, but upon the capacity of the age or people to absorb it.

In this light it may be interesting to look briefly into the comparatively new religion designated by its followers as the "Bahai Truth" which has in so short a time made thousands of converts among people in all civilized countries of the world.

This religion although making the special usual claim to recognition as a special revelation, is singularly free from other superstitions and is does not antagonize other "truths" but seeks to justify and harmonize them them all and also in its near approach to the revelations of modern science.

This religion had its origin in Persia about 1844 when there appeared in that country a teacher calling himself "The Bab" teaching the principles of universal brotherhood united with a philosophy of evolution.

He claimed that the great world religions do not contradict each other but supplement each other and that they all embody much the same truth expressed in different terminology, with different phases emphasized or eliminated according to the needs of the people and the age.

The ministry of "The Bab" lasted six years and was terminated according to the conventional custom, by the martyrdom of this leader brought about by the Mohammedan clergy on a charge of heresy. After his martyrdom the followers were led by Baha Ullah who under the most severe persecutions was exiled with some of his followers to Akka, a penal colony in Syria. Since his death the followers have looked to his son, Abbas Effendi, as their spiritual leader and example, though he makes no claim for himself but that of "Servant of God."

Abbas Effendi is still a state prisoner in Akka but his teachings are

Children whose parents are too poor to educate them are educated at public expense and the revenue for this purpose is derived from an inheritance tax.

sent out to his little bands of followers all over the world, and his life according to his biographers is marked by rare ppurity, sweetness, gentleness and the spirit of absolute non-resistance. The story of his life reads like a fairy tale, but can not be entered into here, for want of space. These people are simple in their habits of life and practice a beautiful philosophy of love and brotherly kindness.

Their Book of Laws advises monogamic marriage and the believers practice it, though polygamy is the custom in Persia. Divorce is to be granted on the demand of either party after a preliminary separation of one year, these people arguing that for the individual to live the most useful life, he must be satisfied, and free from the distracting influences of dissention.

A teacher educating a child secures a claim on his future inheritances.

Every one must work and if work can not be secured it is provided by the authorities.

Their idea of a Supreme being is not a personality but an essence. Life exists in the creation of centers of consciousness and intelligence in this essence, which shall learn to know themselves and to know their relation to the whole infinite essence. (Universe.)

The instrument of this creation is the material universe and the process in evolution. Spirit, they define as the force which brings about these combinations of organic and inorganic forms which link the different processes in the chain of evolution.

They do not deny a future existence, but I quote in substance from one who is familiar with their teachings on this subject: "Self-consciousness being the result of association of this infinite essence with individual forms does not survive the dissolution of the body, while as mind and human character develop, the thoughts, volitions, and characteristics of each human being go to enrich the common fund of world experience and constitute in it tendencies which shall again be manifested in other human beings, while the individual who does not learn to recognize himself as a part of the great scheme but lives for his wn personal gratification has no hereafter except as his thoughts and actions continue in influence and effect to modify the general course of the life of humanity as a whole.

Individuals are compared to the myriads of leaves which fall and decay oily to enrich the soil for the production of other forms; to the millions of germs of every species which never come to germination and the vast number of imperfect forms sacrificed at every step of evolution in order that more perfect forms may be selected by survival to carry on the evolutionary process.

The examination of the great world religions reveals an identity of essence in them from the earliest, The Upanishads, the Bhagavad, the teachings of Zoroaster, Buddha, Mohamet, Christ and Baha Ullah all declare the neness of God, the brotherhood of man, and the beauty of holiness, in slightly different terms than those employed by Emerson, Mrs. Eddy and Herbert Spencer, but nevertheless more nearly allied to the teachings of these last mentioned than their admiring votaries would perhaps be willing to admit impromptu.

Methinks if there came along the interpreter who could understand perfectly the religio-philosophical verbiage of the Christian Scientist, the pure, chaste, scientific terminology of Herbert Spencer, the poetry of Whitman and the fervent utterances of Baha Ulla, he would read in the language of each and see demonstrated in the lives of each, this message: that self can be entirely forgotten in an all embracing love, substituted for egoism as the motive power of human life.

HOW THE DOOM

(Continued from Page One)

cognoscenti that a prominent church in one of the western states, a church which was the pride of the conference and one which was regarded as an especial prize, had requested that the Bishop send me to them, to minister as their pastor. It was thought that when that solemn hour arrived, which is always the hour of contrition and tremulous anticipation, the venerable Bishop would among the rest read off my name as the appointee to this much desired church, with its handsome parsonage and its alluring stipead.

But when my name was reached on the list the Elder of my district slowly rose and declared that "Mr. Frank had decided to 'locate,'" which in the parlance of the church means that I had resolved to retire from the ministry. None could understand my motive. Some thought I had set my ambitions on securing the coveted prize and knew that it had been awarded elsewhere others thought that perhaps I felt a commercial instinct and ambition which had made me yearn for "the fleshpots of Egypt," and hence my sudden and startling resolution.

But the few knew; the few who were near to my heart and my honesty. They knew that I could endure the farce no longer. That I had become convinced no man who sincerely employed his mind and struggled to find the truth could do so with impunity in the Methodist Church. I had no longing for the crown of martyrdom of the heretic's glory; so quietly I resolved upon retirement to await a better day when perhaps a more honest church and a more enlightened creed would again make it possible for me to preach the gospel.

So with one fell swoop I plunged from the aloofness of the ministry into the commonplaces of the commercial struggle and cast my fate with the changers of the market place and the barterers of the mart. I knew not that ever again I would return to ministry, but I felt that it was my duty to engage in other occupations that I first right myself of the theological seas whereon I had already almost foundered.

It was during this long rest in the business world, with its splendid opportunity for elbow-contact with men as they are and not men as we in the abstraction of professional thought think them to be, that I came to lay the real foundations of my theological conclusions, which after another rift in the traditional strata finally evolved into the elaborations of my "Doom of Dogma." But the result was not immediate, and not until Fate compelled me to undergo another severe and final struggle with my convictions in conflict with categorical standards did the light finally break and the dawn of truth lift its brightening beams on my bewildered brain.

CHILD LABOR

Continued from first page.

work for wages, part or all of each day, according to their strength and abilities, it would be much better than the legislation you propose, but I believe legislation either way is against public policy and the principles upon which our government was founded."

After reading this correspondence the onl reflection necessary is that the banker gave it to the press for publication, doubtless under the impression that he had handed out considerable wisdom.

THE EVOLUTION OF RELICION

Clergy Its Greatest Opponents But Ancient Science Becomes Religion Only With Theology Added.

(By J. T. Patch)

Some time ago, the author delivered a lecture on this subject before the Los Angeles Liberal Club, extracts o which are here reproduced from the Humanitarian Review.

The doctrine of evolution is very ancient, dating several centuries before the Christian era. The ancient theory of evolution was of a natural development of the earth and the oneness of th universe. The dualistic theory finally obtained ascendency and has since prevailed throughout the civilized world.

Charles Darwin has been the great leader of modern times in evolution philosophy. Herbert Spencer, Tyndal, Huxxley and Haeckel also have been among the great scientists who have taught and deended this philosophy. They had the advantages of the natural sciences in carrying on their researches—of which the ancients practically knew nothing; to them evolution was a mere speculattion. All the natural sciences are in harmony with evolution phillosophy. The development of any science or of any new truth, is evolution.

The philosophy of evolution is that matter is eternal, and that all forms of organisms, including man, have been evolved from primordial conditions, in opposition to the theory of instantaneous creation by a personality who devised, planned and purposed. Evolution is the world-science, as distinguished from the other sciences.

The greatest opponents of evolution have been the clergy, who are still teaching the ancient theory of creation, and they have misrepresented and tried to cast ignomy on the philosophy of evolution with the belief that it is antagonistic to religion; the same kind of opposition that was made against against the discoveries of Copernicus, Galileo and Kepler. Many books have been written with the view to harmonizing evolution with theology; this shows a tendency to accept the teachings of evolution with the gradual fading away of opposition.

The misconception of what religion is, and the antagonisms of superstition, are the real enemies of evolution, as well as of all progress. Evolution is not in conflict with any religion, but with ancient science that is taught as religion. Instead of evolution being hostile to religion, it explains the evolution of religion, and the pposition it receives confirms evolution philosophy. Evolution recognizes religion as a fact and factor in human progress, and subject to the law of change. The doctrinal elements are transient and evolving, but religion is a subjective principle in human nature always remains.

Ancient philosophy called Christian doctrine is not necessarily religion; being ancient science, it is religion only when made so by theology. It can be substituted by modern science, and modern science would be religion in the same sense. Creed and dogma are not religion, but methods of expressing it. There is a sentiment in hhuman nature which seeks utterance —a resting place—and generally finds it in the wonderful, mysterious and unknown. This perception carries with it emotion, awe and reverence; and this is the case whether a religious philosophy be true or false. If believed, it serves to express the religious sentiment.

Ethical codes, instead of being original revelations, are the result of ages of human experience, evolved from our ideas of duty and responsibility. Their development has been natural, as explained by evolution. The ten commandments were at least a thousand years in maturing before they were written. The moral sentiment of a people or nation is a gradual development, generally independent of any religious teaching. Regradually follows the moral impulse of public sentiment. The same is true of language, which was once claimed to be a revelation. The whole system of jurisprudence has been evolved through ages of trial and conflict. Science cannot be intelligently understood excepting in the light of evolution. Evolution expresses itsself in all reforms. Reform is Evolution. Evolution emphasizes mental flexibility and purpose to accept and assimilate new thoughts and new discoveries, and to progress.

RELIGOIN

IS ROBBERY REDUCED TO A SCIENCE

Christianity Produces Only Grown Children Who Believe in an Omnipotent Santa Claus Waiting to Fill Their Stockings With Harps And Crowns.

(By James Armstrong)
(From Lucifer.)

We are living in a world in which nothing thrives so vigorously as rascality. By rascality I mean every word, look gesture and action which has for its object the deception of others for the purpose of robbing them. It is for this reason that I regard ecclesiasticism as robbery reduced to a science, and the votaries of every religion as hypocrites pretending to believe things which they not only do not believe but which they can not believe.

The average human mind is not so foolish as it seems to be or as we for the most part think it is. The world has had millions of philosophers besides the few who have written books —millions of thinkers whe were wise enough to worship when it was dangerous to scoff, and keen-witted enough to conform when it was disastrous to dissent. Ask any one if he believes in the fairy tales of his childhood and he will tell you no; ask him why and he will look at you in a wondering way as if he thought you regarded him as a fool. But ask the same person of he believes in Christianity, a system of superstition whose doctrines and miracles are even more absurd that the wildest extravaganzas of fairy lore, and he will say yes, and muc.. more emphatically than he has just said no.

In a world in which nothing happens by accident there is a reason for this. Men's religious and genuine devotion do not proceed out of nothing. They are capable of scientifically exact explanation, and the person who does not think so is as chaotic intellectually as he who believes that in the beginning God created the heavens and earth. Genuine piety, whenever it exists, is always found in minds of low development, just as pretend piety, is always found in minds of high development. A sincere Christian is a full-grown child who believes in the Santa Claus called God who is going to fill his stockings with harps and crowns and life everlasting in "the sweet bye and bye!" The make-believe Christian is simply a rascal who chooses to live off the sweat of others ratner than sweat of his own.

The public men of every age have for the most part pretended to believe in the prevailing superstition. Cicero, one of the greatest of Romans, was a high priest of paganism, for such was the road to the political preferment to which he aspired. Cicero, however, did not believe in the superstitions whose robes he wore and mummery he mouthed, for it was he who said that he did not understand how two priests could pass each other without smiling! Long before Cicero was born, Lucretius had written his poem on, "The Nature of Things;" and even before Lucretius, the wisest of the Greeks had torn the current religion to shreds; in spite of which, however, Jupiter and Venus were worshiped for thousands of years by people who knew they did not exist.

Wherein, then, is to be found the marvelous vitality of all superstition? In omnipotent and omnipresent rascality! In the general tendency of every one to live at the expense of some one else, accomplishment of which is secured by nothing so easily and so certainly as religion. All actual or would-be thieves are solemn, and their victims solemnly submit, in the vain hope that they, too will get some of the spoils, the form of thievery becoming outlawed or extinct only when a majority of mankind realize there is nothing in it for them. Then primitive man is historically revealed as a solemn cannibal, which he outgrew to become pious plunderer and in our own times a Christian slave driver. In fact, everything the human race has done, was done religiously, except discover truth!

There is no possible crime that has not been deified and worshiped as a god. Even highway robbery had its God in Hercules, and the votaries of lust thronged the temples of Venus and Aphrodite. Greece in the golden age of its glory, had thousands of temples dedicated to prostitution, and when her soldiers went forth to murder their millions, they did so in the name of Bellona and Mars. Look at such people as the Aztecs and their bloodthirsty divinities, victims of which were as eager to die on their alters as their priests were to sacrifice them. Look at the Jagannath cars of India and the child-eating crocodiles of their sacred rivers, the burning of wives alive with the bodies of their dead husbands, to say nothing of the millions of others whom Superstition actually devoured in countless ways!

Not, however, have all these things, monstrously diabolical though they are, happened because the masses of men did not know it was foolish. Rascality, indeed, teaches us to say—not to think—that they were honestly mistaken, but Intellectuality, which has no cause to serve but its own, teaches us to say as well as to think that the votaries of superstition are the victims of their own duplicity. The evidence is abundant and the proof simple.

Take your own daily life and examine it a little. Some one calls you a liar, sincerely designating you perhaps as that which you really are. But whether you are liar or not, the prevailing superstition concerning personal honor and dignity compels you to strike or kill. It even compels you to assail a physical giant who you know in advance is likely to kill you. Thus an insult will force cowards.

"Who inward searched have livers
white as milk."

to conduct themselves [illegible] to their own loss of li[illegible]e, as if

"They wore the beard of Hercules
or frowning Mars."

Public opinion thus makes many a weakling strut like a giant and bluster and blow as a make-believe fighter, while in his heart he knows he deserves all the insults that have been offered him; and is scared out of his wits at having to resent them. And so Rascality, insulted Rascality, pretend to respect and reverence public opinions in barrooms and streets—the identical Rascality that makes so much noise with its Glory to God in the church and Hurrah for the Flag on the rostrum!

Again, you have seen hundreds of convicts at work under less than a dozen guards. All of them could not be shot if they atempted to escape, but since any one of them may be shot they work on submissively, each awaiting occasion when a break for liberty may be made with little or no personal danger. At times there is a rare spirit who will break for liberty under any and all circumstances, his rarity as a rule promptly effecting his extermination. As in a convict camp, so in the church camp. Nearly all of its mental prisoners—for prisoners they are as truly as galley slaves chained to the oar—would break for Rationalism if every one were certain he would not be hurt or exterminated in so doing. And like convicts, when some one begins to talk of escape there are many to warn the guards—the clergy—of his plot—heresy—that they, too cowardly to try to escape, may make prison-life easier for themselves.

Such is the source of the marvelous vitality of superstition, multitudinous and irrepressible Rascality, which is after all the bulwark of all tyrannies, ecclesiastical or political, ancient, mediaeval and modern despotisms, regardless of whether they manifest themselves as conquering armies, Christian inquisitions, Russian czardoms or American plutocracies! Such social monstrosities do not flourish and have never flourished because the masses believe in them or have believed in them as well as pretend to believe that their fellow pretenders are not pretenders; and so Rascality, omnipresent and irrepressible Rascality, most virulent in its religious phase, like a world-embracing pestilence, rages unchecked and uncheckable!

How often, O Reader! have you heard and continue to hear the ominous. Sh—! Hypocrit[illegible] wind whistling through rascally teeth, accompanied by shoulder-shrugs[illegible]ilation of eyes and furtive glancings about, and the Truth you were about to utter slinks away into the Soul-depths whence it came! Thus thrive all Lies, little and big, and thus fattens all Superstition until grown so great it falls of its own weight, to be swept utterly and forever away by sudden volcanic Truth-upheavels from universal Soul-depths —inevitable cataclysmic annihilation of whole systems of Lies! A lie, big or little, has a life to live, and it will not be abandoned to perish until it ceases to yield tithes, Peter's pence or revenue of some kind; and so truth like poverty-stricken bastardy left on door-steps, must struggle against nameless difficulties to make its way in the world, nor will men doff their hats until its victorious banner is seen flying over the field of Error.

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